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Key US newspaper backs Gingrich for Republican nod

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The largest newspaper in the pivotal US election state of New Hampshire yesterday endorsed former House Speaker Newt Gingrich for the Republican presidential nomination.

Rebuffing longtime frontrunner Mitt Romney, who once served as governor in the neighboring state of Massachusetts, the editors at the New Hampshire Union Leader praised Gingrich's "innovative, forward-looking strategy and positive leadership."

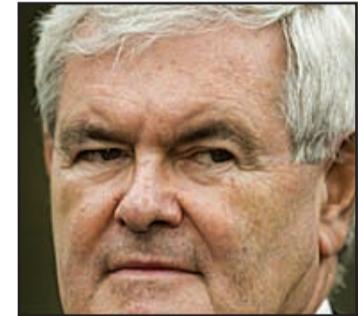
"We don't back candidates based on popularity polls or big-shot backers. We look for conservatives of courage and

conviction who are independent-minded, grounded in their core beliefs about this nation and its people, and best equipped for the job," the newspaper wrote.

It added in the front page editorial: "We are in critical need of the "innovative, forward-looking strategy and positive leadership that Gingrich has shown he is capable of providing."

Romney has been leading in polls in the northern US state, home to the first in the nation presidential primary in early January.

But Gingrich, a former college professor from Georgia



Newt Gingrich

and longtime politician in Washington, has been rapidly closing the gap there in recent weeks. The so-called Granite State has scheduled its primary for January 10, 2012.

"Newt Gingrich is by no means the perfect candidate," the New Hampshire newspaper's editorial said.



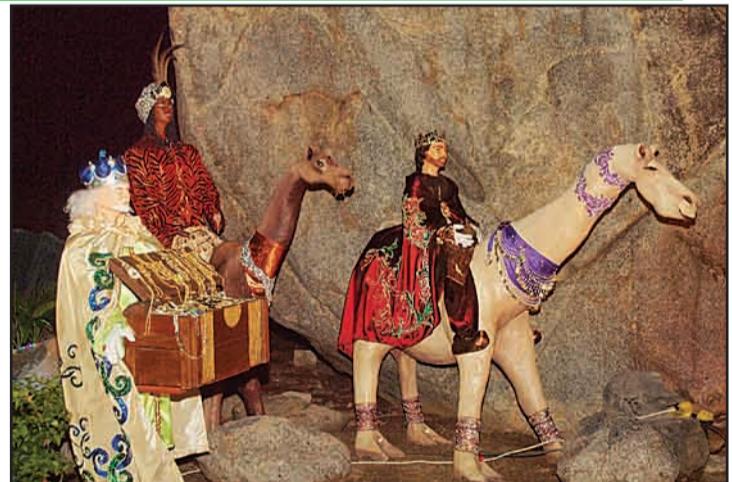
Aruba begins putting on its holiday dress with Pesebre Paradera



The Star of Bethlehem guides visitors to the site

It is always surprising to meet the occasional island visitor who mistakenly thinks that Christmas lights and traditional decorations are reserved for northern climes; a ride around Aruba during the season will open their eyes. An authentic holiday spirit is abundant on the island, as evidenced in a number of barrios, where community members create holiday centers and the entire neighborhood are welcome to congregate, socialize and share the seasonal spirit.

See story on page 4



Three kings bearing gifts

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Pacific Rubiales exploring investing in Aruba



ORANJESTAD -- During his recent visit to Colombia, Aruba's Prime Minister met with representatives of the Pacific Rubiales Company, headed by Chief Executive Officer, Ronald Pantin. Pantin and Pacific Rubiales are well known to Aruba. They were once interested in the exploration of petroleum around Aruban waters, as well as had expressed interest in the purchase of the Oil Refinery here or to supply the refinery with products to be processed here.

Ronald Pantin explained to Eman that they are studying the possibility for investing in Aruba. Some time back they were evaluating participation in the Valero Refinery,

but they claim that this was hindered through conditions set by the United States. However, according to Pantin, this does not exclude the possibility for sitting down at the table again. They are simply waiting for the world conditions to improve so they can return to the possibilities they envisioned.

With respect to the matter of electricity, during the conversations the possibility was raised for Colombia to export liquified gas, LNG, to Aruba. There is currently an ongoing project in Colombia via which they could export gas to Aruba within a matter of 18 to 20 months.

Continued on page 5

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Community assistance necessary to stop manipulation of job permits

ORANJESTAD -- The Minister of Labor and officials of the Department for Labor Progress explained the process for obtaining work permits from DIMAS to fill job vacancies.

They shared information regarding the various situations they have encountered in the few months of their existence. They are now appealing to the community to cooperate with them in the fight against the many forms of manipulation. Reaction and support from the community is necessary for DPL to be successful.

According to the government, there are two important aspects to be considered. One is the Job Center where the data bank of information is housed of those seeking employment and of employers looking for workers. This process has been functioning well with much more interaction with those who have job vacancies.

However, there are a large amount of vacancies registered at the department which seem to not be of interest or for which no one is applying. It appears that there are no job-seekers for these functions.

According to Minister Oduber, the government's primary objective is to reduce the number of first permits. Hence the reason for still another press conference on this matter: to appeal to those who are in search of work to register at the DPL. Oduber showed a pile of documents of numerous functions for which there have been no reaction: aircondition technicians, bar waitresses, gardeners, construction architects, storeroom attendants, hairdressers, etc. It appears that not even one Aruban applied for these functions.

The Minister appeals to all Arubans looking for work, to please register at DPL and report to this department whether



they went to the employer to apply. It is one way to control petitions being requested for foreign applicants.

On the other hand, the government has noted that there is quite a bit of manipulation taking place. Employers are requesting permits for hairdressers, supermarket employees (for example to work in the freezer) and once the permit is granted these employees are moved into other positions.

The government will act very rigidly against this type of deception and will begin denying these types of permits. There are sufficient hairdressers on the island. The

DPL has encountered, for example, a situation where a supermarket requested a permit for an employee to work in the freezer, and upon control they discovered that the supermarket did not even have a freezer.

Henceforth this type of deception will be a thing of the past. DPL will take to the streets and control all such requests for permits. Another form of downright dirty deception is when an employer sends out a petition for a local employee, they indicate that the person must have a College level degree with 5 years of experience.

Continued on page 4



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Do you want to participate in IDEA? Contact IDEA and be part of their informative directorate

ORANJESTAD -- Two weeks ago, during the special Small Business Week program, Minister of Economic, Social and Cultural Affairs, Michelle Hooyboer-Winkelhaar, introduced a Small Business Center named IDEA. IDEA, which means Iniciativa pa Desaroyo di Empresa Arubano - Initiative for the Development of Aruban Businesses - is a government department to give information and guidance for all those who already have, or are planning to start a small business.

IDEA's main objective is to contribute towards sustainable development in the business field with increased productivity and efficiency, in

order to obtain a healthy and solid labor market.

IDEA is still in its pilot phase and is working hard to collect all the necessary information in order to give optimal service to its clients. It is preparing an informative directory in order to give all the necessary information and training to small business entrepreneurs. The directory consists of the following information: name of the

company, direction, telephone number(s), fax, e-mail, website (if any) and information of the type of course/training your business can provide.

IDEA invites all offices that give courses and/or trainings that are relevant to entrepreneurs to please contact DEZHI at 582-1181; ask for Rowena Geerman, or send an e-mail with information to deaci@setarnet.aw

Sinterklaas party at the National Library

ORANJESTAD -- On Thursday, December 1, the Aruba National Library host a Sinterklaas celebration all youngsters ages 3 to 9 years. The event will take place from 5 to

7 p.m. in the UNOCA building on Stadionweg, behind the Plaza Betico Croes

Parents interested in bringing their children to partake in this celebration can register at

Anne Frank Exposition at Nat'l. Library in San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS -- The Anne Frank Exposition from the museum in Amsterdam, which has been traveling around the island for the past two months, is now on display at the National Library in San Nicolas. Schools interested in bringing their students to view the expo can call tel. nr. 584-5277 or 584-3939 and ask for Michelle Roos for an appointment. Library personnel will also act as guides.

Elementary schools visiting the expo will receive work-

books for different grade levels titled "Learning to Read and Write with Anne Frank," including interesting assignments based on her story and her writing, which go well beyond her famous diary.

The exposition is also open to the general public during library hours; Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday opening hours are from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Library is closed on Thursday morning but viewers can still visit the expo by making an appointment; Thursday afternoon, the Library is open from 1:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Don't miss this unique opportunity, as the expo closes on December 8, after which it will travel to the other Dutch Caribbean islands.

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Community assistance necessary

Continued from page 2

And, if no local person responds to the announcement, they then submit a petition for a foreigner. But, strangely so, the announcement then reads so differently: they now want someone not with a college degree, but with a college level mindset, and not 5 years of experience, but only 2 years experience.

These deceptive tactics are a thing of the past; devious employers will no longer be able to continue this kind of foul play. The government has indicated that henceforth these types of petitions will simply be denied, categorically!

The same criteria required of Arubans must apply to foreign applicants as well, if not, the petition will be denied.

Oduber also announced that as of June, at the close of the academic year, DPL will visit all secondary schools to register those students who are not intending to continue studying. This way they will have an inventory of young people finishing school and in which sector they would want to work when they are ready to join the labor force.

The Minister indicated that the government needs the support of the community for this kind of action, especially from

our business owners who are in search of employees. DPL is not interested in penalizing those who have been working here already for many years. DPL's role is to make certain that every one seeking employment finds work and every business owner searching for employees finds the help they need.

Aruba begins putting on its holiday dress with Pesebre Paradera

Continued from page 1

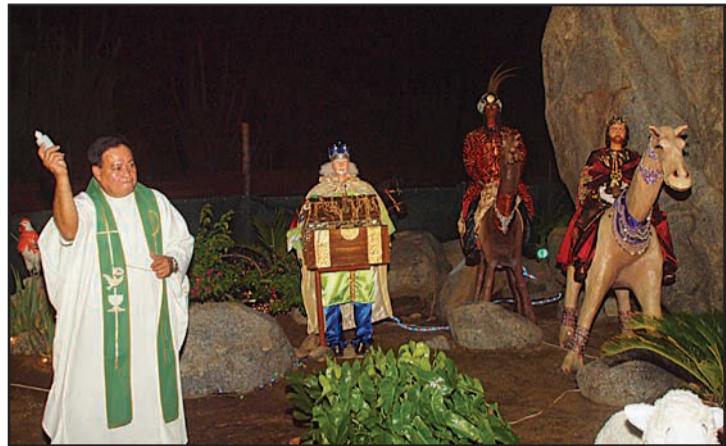
Such are four ladies from Paradera, who live on a small cul-de-sac with a lovely rock formation. One day over four years ago, Maria Infante approached her neighbor, Gina Luidens, who owned the unused patch of land with the intriguing rock formation, proposing they use it for a "pesebre" – a classic manger scene, in Papiamento.

Gina and Maria were joined by Ana Luidens (no relation) and Maureen Silva in creating this life size Paper Mache tableau out of recycled materials; there is remarkable attention to the detailing of props and sumptuous dress, particularly of the 3 Kings. This is the fourth year they have created this social center, which they start working on as early as the February before.

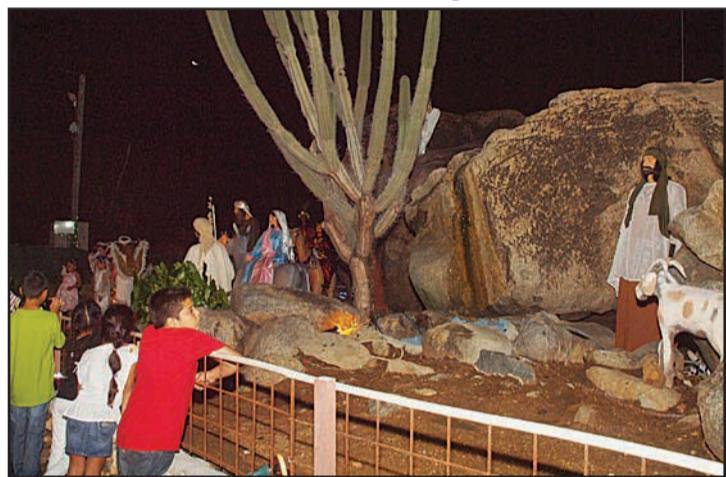
Friday evening, November 25 witnessed a gala unveiling with Father Mariano of the Paradera Church blessing their creation and a throng of islanders gasping in wonder as the lights came up on the figures in a dramatic opening.

A bright Star of Bethlehem guides visitors to the Pesebre Paradera any night of the week, for those wishing to tour the island and enjoy the seasonal lighting and various parks set up in various neighborhoods. Other suggested sites are Seroe Preto and the Wara Wara Christmas Park. You can find a map to the manger site online at <http://www.tinyurl.com/pesebreparadera>.

by Rosalie Klein



Padre blesses the manger scene



Gina, Maria Infante, Ana and Maureen

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Pacific Rubiales exploring investing in Aruba

Continued from page 2

There are also other alternatives, such as a new product that Colombia is producing, namely, liquid carbon. This product reportedly, can reduce the investment cost of producing electricity considerably, according to Pantin.

Pacific Rubiales is the second largest producer of crude in Colombia. They produce heavy crude and gas. Pacific Rubiales will also be the first to export LNG to the islands of the Caribbean and to Central America. As we know, there is currently a great demand for gas as a result of what has taken place with the plants in Japan. Japan is shutting down their nuclear plants and changing to LNG.

These are very attractive prospects for Aruba as we focus on ways to reduce the cost of the production of water and electricity on Aruba. It definitely behoves our government to continue exploring these alternatives with Colombia.

Violence against women brought into focus and change in the law sent to Parliament

ORANJESTAD -- Around the world, November 25th is commemorated as "International Day of the Elimination of Violence Against women." On the 22nd of August 1991 Aruba ratified this treaty and implemented certain changes in the law. There were other laws enacted to impose stronger punishment for all types of violence, but specifically for violence against women.

The world over, Aruba included, violence against women continues to be rather hidden. Many times the victims of violence tries to remain quiet or ignore their situation and just live with the situation. Sometimes this may be because of the shame or the fear of breaking the silence.

Often a child might be involved, or the silence might be because the women is afraid of losing her financial support system.

Many times it is only after a heinous crime has been committed that shocks the community that victims or their loved ones would report the matter and that the community is made aware of the devastation of this type of violence.

We recall the cruel murder of the Mirabal sisters in the Dominican Republic which caused the Latin American and Caribbean countries to begin taking organized action to stop violence against women. On the 25th of November 1960, it was dictator Rafael Trujillo who ordered the Mirabal sisters, known as "Las Inolvidables Mariposas" to be cruelly assassinated. That tragedy and the actions which followed caused the United Nations to adapt November 25th as the "International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women."

In Aruba there are several organizations that are working discreetly and tirelessly to combat this phenomena. Their efforts, among others, is to either help the victims of violence, or to help prosecute the aggressors. Nonetheless, there are still many cases that go unreported and without the victims getting the necessary assistance or to rescue them from the dangerous situation they must live with everyday.

In Aruba's new Law Annals of Crime Punishment, the punishment for domestic violence has been amplified to include Domestic Violence as a punishable crime. This new law is currently at Parliament for ratification and approval.



lence has been amplified to include Domestic Violence as a punishable crime. This new law is currently at Parliament for ratification and approval. The section that has been added to this law indicates that anyone who has been sentenced for domestic violence, will receive additional jail time for domestic violence.

According to Minister Michelle Hooyboer-Winklaar, if we are to put a stop to domestic violence, and violence against women, we will have to get involved in the fight against this ugly crime. Each one of us as family, neighbor, friend, colleague, police, doc-

tor, must begin talking about this situation. Violence is not something private. We must all get involved in the fight against this heinous crime.

The UN is intent on creating unity, action and awareness in the fight against violence against women. Aruba, likewise is intent on doing the same; creating unity, action and awareness of violence against women in our community. We can win this battle if we all work together, speak out, and protect women from their aggressors, and give women the courage to break the cycle of abuse and violence.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

NATO expresses 'regret' over lethal Pakistan strike

ISLAMABAD (AFP) - Yesterday, NATO expressed regret over air strikes that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers as the United States sought to repair relations with Islamabad, plunged into fresh crisis over the lethal attack.

Pakistan reacted with fury over the killings of two dozen soldiers, widely interpreted in the local media as a "deliberate" assault by NATO helicopters and fighter jets on two military posts on the Afghan border early Saturday.

Islamabad conveyed its anger to the United States, blocked NATO convoys from crossing into Afghanistan, ordered a review of its alliance with the US and mulled whether to boycott a key conference on Afghanistan next month.

Hundreds of enraged Pakistanis took to the streets, burning an effigy of President Barack Obama and setting fire to US flags across the country of 167 million where opposition to the government's US alliance is rampant.

At the largest rally, attended by 700 people outside the US consulate in the port city of Karachi, protestors shouted "stay away Americans, Pakistan is ours, we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our army".

The United States, which depends on Pakistan as a vital lifeline to supply 130,000 foreign troops fighting in landlocked Afghanistan, yesterday scrambled to salvage the al-

liance, backing a full inquiry and expressing condolences.

NATO also sought to soothe Islamabad's rage, but stopped short of issuing a full apology to Pakistan for the "tragic, unintended" killings.

A Western official said allies were trying to ascertain "exactly" what Pakistan's public position meant and to prevent lasting damage as a result of the suspended supply lines into Afghanistan.

It also remains unclear exactly what happened in the

early hours of Saturday in Pakistan's tribal district of Mohmand.

Investigators are to examine whether Afghan and American troops along the border may have been fired upon first -- whether by insurgents or soldiers -- and to what extent their operation was co-ordinated with Pakistan.

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen issued a statement, saying he had written to Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

German police clash with thousands blocking nuclear train



AFP photo shows anti-nuclear protesters blocking the road to Gorleben, northern Germany on November 27, 2011, along the route of the so-called Castor transport.

DANNENBERG (AFP) - German police battled thousands of anti-nuclear protesters Sunday, many chained to railroad tracks, who have caused delays as they try to block a train carrying radioactive waste.

The convoy taking the German waste on a 1,200-kilometer (750-mile) journey from a reprocessing center in northwestern France to a storage facility in northern Germany was stopped for 18 hours, including overnight, amid mass demonstrations.

Thousands of activists swarmed the tracks along the route near the train's final destination in Dannenberg and boasted that the odyssey's duration had now topped the 92-hour record set during a shipment one year ago.

Police said they detained about 1,300 people.

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Turkey backs Arab League sanctions of Syria



Supporters of Lebanon's anti-Syrian opposition hold a picture of late premier Rafiq al-Hariri during a rally in the northern city of Tripoli on November 27, 2011 to denounce the Syrian regime and its Shiite ally Hezbollah. The rally in the northern port city was organised by the Future Movement, the main opposition party headed by Hariri, to mark the 68th anniversary of Lebanon's independence. (AFP PHOTO)

ANKARA (AFP) - Turkey will support a raft of sanctions on neighbour Syria agreed by the Arab League at a meeting in Cairo, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said YESTERday.

"Turkey is supporting the decisions and measures taken by the Arab League against Syria," Davutoglu was quoted as saying by the Anatolia news agency on the sidelines of the Cairo meeting, to which non-Arab Turkey was invited.

Davutoglu said the Arab League and Turkey were "in full agreement" concerning the Syrian crisis.

"Nobody can expect Turkey and the Arab League to remain silent on the killings of civilians and the Syrian regime's

increasing oppression of innocent people," he said.

But the minister emphasized that the Syrian crisis should be handled in a way that would not lead to any outside intervention.

Yesterday, Arab foreign ministers agreed a list of sweeping sanctions designed to cripple the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, which has defied international pressure to halt a bloody crackdown on protests.

Syrian forces yesterday killed at least 23 civilians, seven of them in the flashpoint region of Homs that has been under siege for several weeks in an operation to crush dissent, a rights group said.



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Sarkozy party rejects idea of plot to ruin Strauss-Kahn

PARIS (AFP) - French President Nicolas Sarkozy's party yesterday rejected as "grotesque" suggestions that Dominique Strauss-Kahn was brought down by an elaborate plot to wreck his presidential ambitions.

"This story is ridiculous ... this plot argument is grotesque," said UMP party leader Jean-Francois Cope, while Interior Minister Claude Gueant dismissed the allegations as "pure fantasy."

The remarks came after a New York Review of Books article that included hints by associates of the disgraced ex-IMF chief that his arrest on sexual assault charges in New York on May 14 might have been a set-up.

Strauss-Kahn, then tipped to beat Sarkozy in France's 2012 presidential elections, was taken off a plane to Paris that afternoon after maid Nafissatou Diallo said he had attacked her in a posh Manhattan hotel.

Strauss-Kahn resigned as head of the International Monetary Fund IMF as a result of the scandal.

The charges were later dropped after prosecutors said Diallo lied about details of her allegations, but they and subsequent claims of sexual misconduct in France were enough to end Strauss-Kahn's political ambitions.

The author of the New York Review of Books story, Edward Epstein, told AFP on Saturday: "I didn't say it was a political conspiracy but I would say that people wanted to find evidence of an indiscretion of his that could derail either his (French presidential) candidacy or even (his work at) the IMF."

One of the politician's lawyers, William Taylor, said Strauss-Kahn may have been "the target of a deliberate effort to destroy him as a political force."

Putin warns West against meddling in Russia polls

MOSCOW (AFP) - Prime Minister Vladimir Putin yesterday warned the West against interfering in Russia's upcoming elections after he formally agreed to run for a historic third term as president.

Speaking ahead of key December 4 parliamentary polls, which will be followed by a presidential ballot in March, the Russian strongman said

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any Western attempts to stir discontent and influence the election results would be futile.

Putin told a glitzy congress of his ruling United Russia party that foreign capitals were paying NGOs in Russia "in order to eventually influence the course of the election campaign in our country."

"Useless work, wasted money," he said in a giant hall

filled to bursting. "Firstly, Judas is not the most respected biblical figure among our people," he said, comparing any such behaviour to a betrayal.

In a clear message to debt-ridden Western powers he added: "And second, it would be better if they used this money to pay off their national debt and stop conducting an in-

effective and costly foreign policy."

Putin delivered his stinging warning after formally agreeing to stand as the ruling party candidate in next year's presidential election which he is certain to win and that will fix Russia's future for years to come.

His party approved his nomination by a unanimous

614-0 vote in a pomp-filled ceremony that was beamed live across the nation on state television.

The 59-year-old Putin's expected return could keep him in power through 2024 and turn him into Russia's longest-serving leader -- as either premier or head of state -- since the Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

Health & Living

HIV trial scrapped after gel found to be ineffective

WASHINGTON (AFP) - In a major setback for AIDS prevention research, a clinical trial of a new vaginal gel supposed to reduce HIV infections has been suspended after studies showed it to be ineffective.

Researchers from the Microbicide Trials Network, set up by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), expressed surprise at the outcome as a previous study on a gel containing the drug tenofovir had shown encouraging results.

Researchers are striving to produce a gel or a pill that protects women against HIV infection but still allows them to get pregnant so it can be used in sub-Saharan Africa and other places where condom use can be a problem.

A first trial by the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) showed reduced HIV infections in 39 percent of women treated with the tenofovir gel, and in 54 percent of those who used it regularly.

Those results, published in 2010, raised hopes that a new gel could slow the transmission of HIV/AIDS and finally provide women with a groundbreaking means of protecting themselves.

Observers had hoped VOICE (Vaginal and Oral Interventions to Control the Epidemic), a trial started in September 2009 and conducted with the help of 5,000 women in South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, would back those findings.

An interim review of VOICE by an independent data and safety monitoring board, however, determined that the tenofovir gel was even less effective than a placebo. Part of the research has now been canceled.

Another area of the three-part trial, involving a tenofovir pill, was scrapped in September for similar reasons, but studies are ongoing on a third avenue using tenofovir and a booster drug.

"For now, the study will continue and we will work to complete the remaining visits for the women continuing in the study," researchers Sharon Hillier and Ian McGowan wrote.

"We are all eager to understand whether adherence, our daily dosing strategy, inflammation or other factors could explain the lack of oral and vaginal tenofovir effectiveness in VOICE, we will not likely have all of the assays completed until later next year."

Hillier said she was "surprised and disappointed" by the results, and the researchers said they must wait until the end of the remaining trial before a fuller analysis could be undertaken.

CAPRISA director Salim Abdoor Karim, a site director in the VOICE trial, admitted to being gravely disappointed.

"These results were totally unexpected as there is good evidence from laboratory research, animal studies and human trials showing that tenofovir gel prevents HIV. However, science does not always produce the answer we hope for," he said.

"This is particularly pertinent when a drug's effectiveness is dependent on a complex combination of the biological activity of the drug and the human behavior influencing use of the drug as prescribed during the study."

"I look forward to seeing the complete results and, in particular, an analysis of whether the drug levels in the female genital tract provides any clues to the study's outcome."

Despite the setback, there have been other encouraging signs in the HIV/AIDS struggle in recent years.

In South Africa, whose population of 5.6 million HIV-infected people is the biggest in the world, the incidence rate fell by a third between 2001 and 2009, from 2.4 percent to 1.5 percent.

But the sub-Saharan African region continues to have the largest number of people infected with HIV.

In 2010, they made up some 68 percent or 22.9 million of all HIV-infected people.

WHO links child mortality to economic crisis

TASHKENT (AFP) - The World Health Organisation warned on Saturday that only a stronger political commitment to child health could prevent a dangerous rise in mortality rates at a time of economic uncertainty, Chan said.

She noted that her Central Asian host country of Uzbekistan "enjoys the highest level of political commitments" to child care issues since its 1991 independence from Moscow.

"This country has well functioning immunisation campaign with excellent and sensitive surveillance. This is the absolutely critical asset when protecting the health of children," Chan said.

Uzbek President Islam Karimov promised at the event's opening to commit a "further \$1.5 billion... in the coming years" to maternal and child healthcare issues.

International human rights groups have criticized Uzbekistan's recent family planning programme for allegedly including the forced sterilization of women.

The Uzbek health ministry has repeatedly denied the charge.

Sci-Tech

NASA launches biggest-ever rover to Mars



CAPE CANAVERAL (AFP) - The US space agency's Curiosity rover blasted off weekend on a nearly nine-month journey to Mars where it will search for signs that life once existed on the Red Planet.

The rover is the biggest and most advanced ever built, and is part of NASA's \$2.5 billion

Mars Science Laboratory spacecraft that lifted off at 10:02 am (1502 GMT) atop an Atlas V rocket.

"Liftoff of the Atlas V with Curiosity, seeking clues to the planetary puzzle about life on Mars," said NASA commentator George Diller as the white

rocket soared skyward from the Florida space pad.

After landing in August 2012, scientists hope it will return valuable information about the past, present and future habitability of Mars to help the US space agency plan a human mission there, perhaps by the 2030s.

While the rover is not equipped to detect living organisms, it may find samples of organic carbon that indicate life once existed on Mars, or that perhaps it still does in microbial form.

Curiosity is powered by nuclear fuel and is about twice the size of NASA's twin solar-powered rovers Spirit and Opportunity that landed in 2004.

It carries a robotic arm, a drill, a set of 10 science instruments including two color video cameras, a laser beam for zapping interesting rocks and a tool kit for analyzing their contents.

The shark, a predator turned prey



BERGEN (AFP) - Sharks may strike terror among swimmers at the beach but the predators are increasingly ending up as prey, served up in fish-and-chips shops, sparking concern among environmentalists.

The great white shark, the one that most frequently comes to mind, is a protected species -- though that hasn't prevented its stocks from declining -- but tens of millions of other sharks are caught each year by fishermen.

Why are they in such demand? Their fins are the main ingredient in shark fin soup, a prestigious dish in traditional Chinese cuisine, and even in Europe shark meat is often served to consumers, usually without their knowledge.

"People don't realise they're eating shark because it's not called shark, but they are," Sonja Fjordham, the head of Shark Advocates International, told AFP on the

sidelines of an international conference this week on migratory species in Bergen, Norway.

The name can be misleading: "rock salmon" often sold in fish and chips shops in Britain, Australia and elsewhere is actually a small type of shark called spiny dogfish.

Ecologists' main concern is the practice known as "finning", when fishermen cut the fins off of sharks and then throw the fish back in the water, usually still alive and leaving them to a certain death by drowning, suffocation, blood loss or to be devoured by other fish.

Bans on the practice exist in many countries but are often ignored.

In a bid to help put an end to the practice, the European Commission recently proposed to tighten its legislation by requiring boats fishing in EU waters and EU-based ships fishing anywhere in the world

to "unload sharks with the fins attached to their bodies."

At the top of the food chain, sharks are indispensable for keeping the oceans' ecosystems in check. Scientists don't even dare consider the consequences if the animals were to disappear entirely, a fate faced by 20 percent of shark species, according to Fjordham.

Palau, a small archipelago in the Pacific, has set a good example, making the most of its shark population by creating a sanctuary that has become a popular ecotourist site.

Diving with sharks now accounts for eight percent of Palau's gross domestic product (GDP), each animal bringing in 1.9 million dollars throughout its lifetime, according to the Australian Institute of Marine Sciences.

Palau remains however an isolated example. Elsewhere, the trend is alarming.

The giant manta ray, a cousin of the shark, has also fallen victim to a similar fate: prized in Asia, it is turned into a powder used in traditional Chinese medicine.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Association, catches of manta rays have more than tripled in recent years, from 900 tonnes in 2000 to 3,300 tonnes in 2007.

In Bergen the UN Convention on Migratory Species added giant manta rays to its lists of protected species.

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ACROSS

- Nursery rhyme home
- Football's flight
- Chinese tea
- Norms
- SSW, e.g.
- Schooner
- Nomads of the Great Plains
- Father: Fr.
- Type of glass
- Hung around
- Negative conjunction
- Carry on the back
- Bagel seed
- Earth pigment
- Become older
- What Whoopi posed as in "Sister Act"
- Warfare
- Guarantee
- Mote
- "Born in the _____"
- Less smart
- Defeats
- 30th OT book
- Comanche's group
- Mrs. Munster
- Telecast
- One of the Waltons

51. Earlier, in verse

52. Football announcer

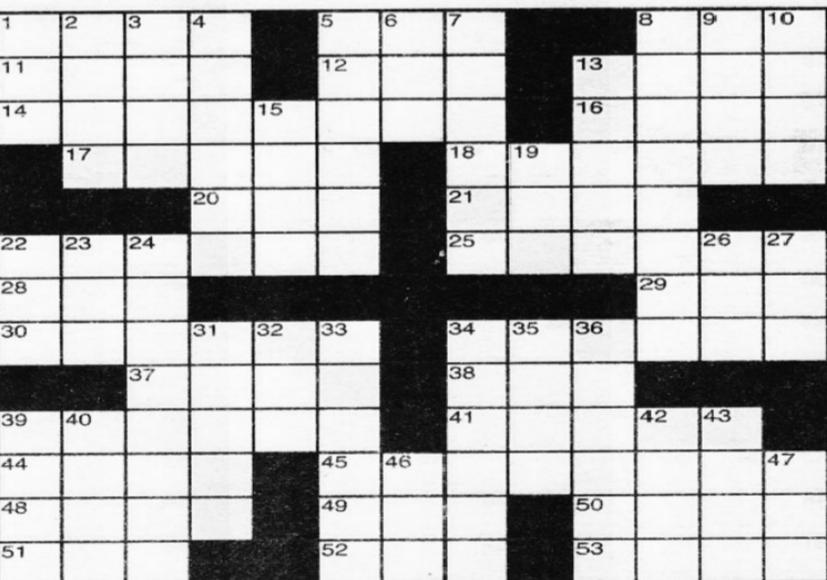
53. Pro ___

DOWN

- Vacation resort
- Symbol of Ireland
- ___ hygiene
- Dali's native land
- Cling
- River, to Pedro
- Heraldic

- pieces
- Black Kettle, for one
- Take on hands
- Was a copycat
- Torrent
- ___ smasher
- Thou: Fr.
- Bomber gp.
- Gascon's excess
- Everglades native
- Bolt holder
- "___ Given Sunday"
- Common name for a cow

TRIBAL COUNCIL



SOLUTION

7	8	5	3	2	6	1	4	9
1	6	4	8	9	7	5	2	3
3	9	2	5	1	4	9	6	7
5	3	8	2	4	9	4	9	5
6	2	1	7	3	8	4	9	6
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8	5	3	9	4	5	3	7	8
2	1	9	8	1	3	5	2	
4	7	6	9	8	1	3	5	2

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is never repeated in a row or column. In addition, every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.

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C.V. TAS
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In Oranjestad:
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582-5447
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Sudoku

	7		9			3		2
			4	5				6
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							8	6
1			9	7				
7		5			6	4		

7	8	5	3	2	6	1	4	9
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5	3	8	2	4	9	4	9	5
6	2	1	7	3	8	4	9	6
9	4	7	1	6	5	2	9	1
8	5	3	9	4	5	3	7	8
2	1	9	8	1	3	5	2	
4	7	6	9	8	1	3	5	2



Office Systems Aruba

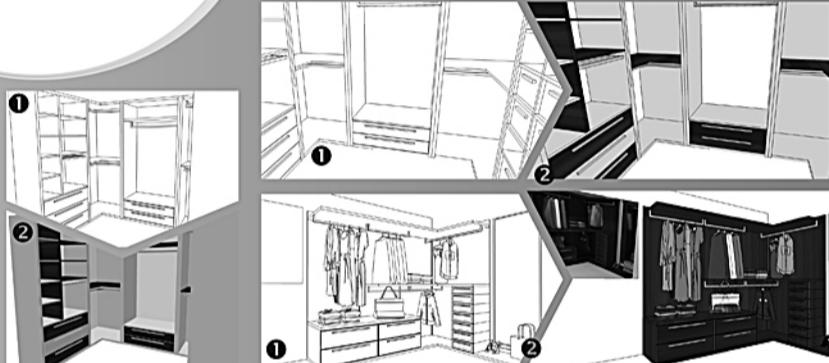
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Cold comfort as austerity bites in Europe

LONDON - While workers protest against austerity measures on the streets, cash-strapped Europeans are feeling the pain at home, struggling to pay for heating as winter approaches, reviving soup kitchens for the poorest and getting rid of costly pets.

The debt crisis now ravaging the euro zone has seen governments cut spending, including to welfare programs, and raise taxes. Unemployment is rising and many Europeans are planning for a bleaker future.

Romanian mayor Florin Cazacu staged a six-day hunger strike last week over cuts to heating subsidies which meant his town of Brad could not afford fuel oil and 10,000 of its residents, public institutions and hospital faced a bitter winter.

He called off the strike on Saturday after central government agreed to pay 1 million lei (\$304,000), but said that would only cover 15-20 days of heating for the town where temperatures can fall as low as minus-30 degrees Celsius.

"So what is needed is for the government to ... allot 2,500 tons of fuel oil from state reserves to cover heating needs for the entire winter," said the mayor, whose town hall had a shortfall of 3 million lei to buy fuel oil.

The government of Romania - the EU's second-poorest member state, where the average wage is less than 400 euros (\$530) a month - cut salaries and raised tax to plug its budget gap.

Wood-burning stoves, once a symbol of poverty, are making a comeback as Greeks balk at soaring heating bills after the government in Athens raised energy taxes to help plug finances.

Even in wealthy Germany, Europe's paymaster and biggest hope of a bailout lifeline, the crisis has led to a surge in soup kitchens, according to the author of a book on poverty.

But it is not only the poor who are feeling the extra pinch. Pawnbrokers report a roaring trade. Paris's Credit Municipal, founded in 1637, has seen a 20 percent rise in business in the last year with an average of 700 customers a day, catering mainly to the "squeezed middle classes."

Britain's Citizens Advice Bureau, a charity which gives advice on issues including debt and employment, said it had seen an increase in enquiries and from a wider section of society.

In a country, not part of the euro zone, where it is joked that people care more about their animals than each other,

even beloved pets are falling foul of shrinking household budgets.

London's Battersea Dogs and Cats Home this month reported a surge in the number of people giving up their pets.

The Guardian newspaper reported a rise in the number of people harming or killing their pets to claim insurance money.

Anger across Europe at the scrimping and making do has been compounded by reports some company directors and bankers are doing very well in the crisis and a feeling in some states that the super-rich have evaded taxes or not paid their fair share.

A report that pay for directors of Britain's top 100 companies rose 49 percent last year has added to the sense of outrage among low-paid public sector workers who will stage Britain's biggest strike in 30 years next week over pensions.

A general strike halted public transport and factories across Portugal on Thursday, when Bulgarian railway workers also walked out over plans to cut 2,000 jobs.

In Greece, dozens of members of a union clashed with riot police outside an office of the biggest power producer PPV. The company is charged with collecting a new property tax via electricity bills.



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Finance

IMF readying 600-billion-euro bailout for Italy

ROME (AFP) - The IMF could bail out Italy with up to 600 billion euros (\$794 billion), an Italian newspaper reported yesterday, as Prime Minister Mario Monti came under pressure to speed up anti-crisis measures.

The money would give Monti a window of 12 to 18 months to implement urgent budget cuts and growth-boosting reforms "by removing the necessity of having to refinance the debt," La Stampa reported, citing IMF officials in Washington.

The IMF would guarantee rates of 4.0 percent or 5.0 percent on the loan -- far better than the borrowing costs on commercial debt markets, where the rate on two-year and five-year Italian government bonds has risen above 7.0 percent.

Italy needs to refinance about 400 billion euros in debt next year.

The size of the loan would make it difficult for the IMF to use its current resources so different options are being

explored, including possible joint action with the European Central Bank in which the IMF would be guarantor.

"This scenario is because resistance from Berlin to a greater role for the ECB in helping states in difficulty -- starting with Italy -- could be overcome if the funds are given out under strict IMF surveillance," the report said.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy's office meanwhile said in a statement that any problem with Italy would affect the very heart of the eurozone.

"If there is an Italian problem, then it is the heart of the eurozone that is hit," it said. "It is up to Italy to do what it has undertaken to do."

Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned at a summit with Italy in the French city of Strasbourg last week that "a collapse of Italy would inevitably be the end of the euro," Monti's press office said on Friday.

Iraq inks \$17 bn gas joint venture deal

BAGHDAD (AFP) - Iraq finalised a \$17-billion joint venture deal with Shell and Mitsubishi to capture and process gas from its southern oil fields, at a ceremony at the oil ministry yesterday.

The deal was signed by Shell CEO Peter Voser, Mitsubishi Vice President Tetsuro Kuwabara and Iraqi Oil Minister Abdelkarim al-Luybi.

"Today's event represents a big change in the oil industry," Luaybi said, adding that the deal constitutes the best use of the gas in line with Iraq's needs.

"We are pleased to be partners in this project," said Shell's Voser.

"Iraq is now an important partner for us in the Middle

East," he said.

Earlier this month the Iraqi cabinet approved the deal which creates the Basra Gas Company, a joint venture to process associated gas from the Rumaila, Zubair and West Qurna-1 fields.

SATURDAY'S Crossword Answer



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Michael Jackson doctor to be sentenced



November 7 for having given Jackson an overdose of the anesthetic propofol on June 25, 2009 at his plush Holmby Hills mansion to help him fight chronic insomnia.

Jackson, aged 50 at the time of his death, had hired Murray at a salary of

\$150,000 a month to look after him as he rehearsed and embarked on a series of planned comeback shows in London.

During the trial, the court heard a two-hour police interview with Murray in which he recounted the star's final days and hours, and claimed he found Jackson lifeless after leaving his bedside for only two minutes.

But it also heard evidence that Murray was on the phone with a series of girlfriends at the crucial time Jackson was on his deathbed, and that he delayed calling 911 and failed to tell paramedics what he had given the star.

A seven-man, five-woman jury took barely a day to reach a guilty verdict. Minutes after the verdict was read out, Murray was ignominiously handcuffed as judge Michael Pastor remanded him in custody pending sentencing.

Murray chose not to testify himself during the trial -- experts suggested he would have been ripped to pieces by prosecutor David Walgren, who

had already comprehensively dismantled the defense case.

But days after his conviction it emerged that he had given media interviews during the closing weeks of the trial, for a documentary which was screened in the United States and Britain on which he collaborated.

That could weigh against him with judge Pastor, who was quick to take action over alleged contempt of court during the trial, including against the defense's star witness Dr Paul White, who was fined \$250.

Walgren said the TV interviews back up his assertion that Murray "displayed a complete lack of remorse for causing Michael Jackson's death."

"Even worse than failing to accept even the slightest level of responsibility, the defendant has placed blame on everyone else, including the one person no longer here to defend himself, Michael Jackson," he wrote.

The eight-page prosecution claim estimated Jackson's projected earnings from the London "This is It" shows at \$100 million, as well as saying Murray should compensate Jackson's children for nearly \$2 million spent on his funeral.

Murray's lawyers, Chernoff and Michael Flanagan -- who reportedly fell out with each other as their case gradually collapsed during the trial -- insist that he should not be jailed, as he poses no threat to the public.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Michael Jackson's doctor Conrad Murray is due back in court on Tuesday for sentencing, facing up to four years in prison after being convicted over the King of Pop's 2009 death.

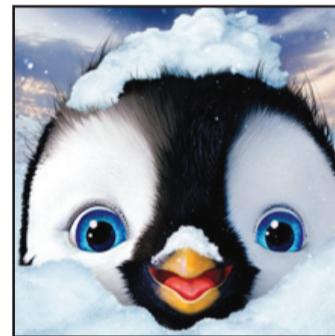
Prosecutors want Murray to get the maximum jail term and be ordered to compensate the Jackson family for the star's loss of earnings, estimated at \$100 million for the comeback shows he was preparing when he died.

But the 58-year-old medic's lawyer Ed Chernoff asked in submissions to court last week for his client to be given parole and community service, underlining that he will likely never practice medicine again.

"To subject this former doctor, described by all who know him as a gentle man who devoted his professional life to providing care to the underserved population, to a lengthy jail term would be wholly inappropriate," he wrote.

Murray was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter on

'Happy Feet Two' poor performances leads to layoffs



LOS ANGELES - Due to the poor performance of Happy Feet Two at the box office, 600 of the 700 employees at Dr. D Studios are getting laid off in early-December, according to IF.com.au.

Released on November 18, "Happy Feet Two" has not found much success. It opened in 3,606 theaters and came in second at the box office during its debut weekend, grossing \$21.2 million. Its estimated budget was \$140 million.

Said to be \$70 million over budget on completion, Happy Feet 2 was expected to mirror the success of the hugely popular original in the US.

With three new family films released last week -- "The Muppets," "Hugo" and "Arthur Christmas" -- "Happy Feet Two" is unlikely to gain further traction.

Breakfast

7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

EGG DISHES

*2 eggs sunny side up
with ham & cheese

*Scrambled

with ham, cheese, onions,
green pepper, tomato, mushroom

*Plain omelettes

with ham, cheese, onion, green pepper,
tomato, mushroom

All egg dishes are served with a choice of :
white or whole wheat baguette or sliced
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*PASTECHEI HORMA

*CRÊPES

*SWEET CRÊPES

*BAGEL with cream cheese,
smoked salmon, boiled egg

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or baguette

*KERRIE-KERRIE (FISH)

*CONCH

*FISH EGG

*SHRIMPS

*FISH FILLET

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Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their "home away from home" in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters,

caterers, airline pick-up and drop-off; they even boast a shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spacious, offering privacy for

homes come with cable TV, high-speed fiber-optic Internet connection, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are available for a modest fee.



parents or a few couples. Beautifully appointed kitchens and bathrooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All

Concierge services to arrange rental cars, spa appointments, activities and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting online at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: www.goldecoastaruba.com to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.



Discover the unique taste of Middle Eastern "fast food" at Yalla Yalla



A charming place to watch the world go by

Middle Eastern cuisine has its devotees, as it is very tasty and exotic, without being too spicy. Yalla Yalla recently opened its doors in the South Beach Center in Palm Beach, and if you have never tried the dishes unique to that region of the world, you are in for a treat.

Yalla Yalla literally means "fast," as these are the sort of dishes those from the region will enjoy when they want to grab a quick meal. The menu is more than reasonably priced, with a generous portion of tender Beef Shish Kabab or Shrimp Kabab, for those with a taste for seafood, costing only \$14.50.

A hefty serving of Lamb Shoarma is only \$12; Chicken Shoarma \$8, and the portions are big enough to share. Classic Middle Eastern side dishes such as Tabouleh and Hummus are served with freshly made pita bread; great for starters or a late night snack.

Yalla Yalla sports a lovely open air terrace, perfect for people watching, and is attached to the South Beach Lounge, were their singular



Beef Shish Kabab

snacks are also served.

In the mood for something a little more gourmet and interesting for dinner that won't ruin your budget? -Yalla Yalla has what you are looking for: a true dining adventure in charming surroundings and delicious food that is more than a little different from the staid old menu. Dinner is served from 6:00 PM until 1:00 AM nightly.

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SPORT

Tennis: Federer wins record sixth Tour Finals title



LONDON (AFP) - Roger Federer won a record sixth ATP World Tour Finals title with a 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3 victory over France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga on Sunday.

Federer came to London's O2 Arena determined to end a frustrating year on a high and he fulfilled that ambition by moving ahead of Pete Sampras and Ivan Lendl on the list of Tour Finals champions in the 100th final of his majestic career.

The 30-year-old, who retains the title he won 12 months ago, has now won 70 trophies in his career and has also equalled Lendl's record of 39 match wins in the end-of-season event.

While rivals Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray have all faded in the final weeks of a gruelling season, Federer is still going strong and this triumph -- which followed back to back titles in Basel and Paris

-- will be a major boost to his confidence heading into 2012.

Although Federer, who takes home the winners' cheque worth \$770,000, ends the season without a Grand Slam title for the first time since 2002, talk of his demise seems greatly exaggerated.

The 16-time Grand Slam winner has reeled off a 17-match winning streak since the US Open and he will rise back above Murray to third in the world rankings as a result.

Tsonga had hoped to become the first Frenchman to win this event in its 41-year history.

But the 26-year-old was unable to emulate his famous Wimbledon quarter-final win in June when he became the first player to beat the Swiss star from two sets down in a Grand Slam.

Tsonga has served more aces than anyone on the ATP Tour this season and bashed down his 815th of the year to open his first service game in front of an 18,000 crowd including the Duchess of Cambridge and Cristiano Ronaldo.

US win World Cup.....

continued from page 15



Matt Kuchar (L) and Gary Woodland (R) of US smile before their victory in the 56th World Cup of Golf tournament at the Mission Hills golf course in Haikou.

format to make it more appealing to top players.

Urquhart denied Omega was planning to pull out of the tournament it has sponsored since 2007, which now takes place every two years to fit around the Olympics following the sport's inclusion as a Games discipline from Rio 2016.

But he said: "This is the last World Cup in this format which we are committed to... I can't say now that... in November 2013, we will be in this place or that place."

The stinging criticism is a blow for the tournament organisers, Hong Kong brothers Kenneth and Tenniel Chu and their Chinese government backers.

The Chus have poured in millions of dollars to build the five-star Mission Hills resort on Hainan Island in the belief it will become the "World Cup Headquarters" until 2025 when their contract ends.

They said they "would go it alone" to keep the competition in China and are in talks with tour chiefs about changing the



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Golf: US win World Cup after long decade in cold

HAINAN (AFP) - Putting machines Matt Kuchar and Gary Woodland on Sunday claimed the United States' first golf World Cup since Tiger Woods and David Duval lifted the trophy 11 years ago.

And they did so with a text message of inspiration from US golfing great Phil Mickelson.

"I got a text message earlier this morning from Phil Mickelson saying, 'Go make some birdies early, you guys can win this thing, and bring another one home for the United States'", world number 10 Kuchar said.

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The Americans took Mickelson's advice, and grabbed the advantage from an Irish tailspin as tournament favourites Rory McIlroy and Graeme McDowell endured a sloppy final day at Mission Hills in southern China.

On the greens, Kuchar was in sublime form, helping the pair hole six birdies to finish top of the leader board on 5 under 67 and 24 under overall.

"For Gary and I to put our name on this trophy, on the World Cup trophy, alongside of Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player, Tiger Woods and David Duval -- the list goes on and on -- it's a real honour," said a proud Kuchar.

It is Kuchar's first team event since his inclusion in the US Team victory at the President's Cup in Melbourne earlier this month.

The pair kept their nerve during a tight and thrilling front nine to build a two-point lead over chasing Germans, world number-four Martin Kaymer and Alex Cejka at the halfway stage.

Germany claimed joint second with a resurgent England on 22 under overall.

England's Ian Poulter and Justin Rose accelerated up the leaderboard thanks to their late rally, holing eight birdies and an eagle.

McIlroy and 2010 US Open champion Graeme McDowell led the field from round two but finished tied fourth with Australia, Scotland and the impressive Netherlands on 21 under overall.

World number-two McIlroy missed several putts and fluffed another crucial 25 footer on the 18th which would have given Ireland a share of the runners up cheque in the US\$7.5 million tournament.

The president of the title sponsor, Omega's Stephen

Urquhart, put a damper on the last day of the tournament however.

He said he was unhappy with the strength of the field, after just a token number of top players opted to represent their countries in the 28-nation team event.

For the World Cup to become a respected tournament, he said it had to be staged around the world like football, rugby, cricket and other sports with World Cup events.

"China is too immature a market to put the World Cup where it should be. It's too early for China to support by itself a tournament on this scale," Urquhart said.

continues on page 14

NBA Tentative deal ... continued from page 15

Owners locked out players on July 1 after the previous collective contract expired.

Owners, claiming \$300 million in losses last season among 22 of the league's 30 clubs, said they needed changes in how they divided some \$4 billion in revenue and stricter controls on salary spending.

The New York Times and other media reported that the proposed deal features an approximate 50-50 split of revenues -- a big cut for players who received 57 percent of basketball-related income last season. The players could get up to 51 percent if the league meets certain financial targets.

The newspaper also re-

ported it calls for shorter contracts, smaller raises and tougher penalties on the top-spending teams, something players had bitterly opposed because it could limit their options as free agents.

Despite concessions, players association president Derek Fisher said he was happy to be part of reaching an agreement.

According to the current plan, the season will tip off with a mouth-watering triple-header on December 25, when Miami visit Dallas in a rematch of last season's championship series, plus Boston at New York and Chicago at Kobe Bryant's Los Angeles Lakers.



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NBA: Tentative deal paves way for Christmas tip-off

NEW YORK (AFP) - A tentative agreement to end the NBA's crippling lockout and save the season will have owners and players scrambling to get the details in place in time for a star-studded Christmas tip-off.

"There is a lot of work to be done in a lot of places, with a lot of committees and player groups and the like, but we are optimistic that it will hold and

we will have ourselves an NBA season," NBA commissioner David Stern said as he and players' association executive director Billy Hunter sat wearily side by side around 3:00 am on Saturday to announce the handshake agreement.

After months of wrangling between billionaire owners and millionaire players left fans soured, news that the

sides had agreed on a framework for a deal even caught the attention of US President -- and basketball fan -- Barack Obama, who gave a "thumbs up" signal and said "Good deal" when asked about it.

Some players sounded euphoric as they took to Twitter.

"Excited for the fans that stayed patient with us!"

However, plenty of work remained to formalize what



From left, Maurice Evans, Derek Fisher, Billy Hunter, N.B.A. Commissioner David Stern and the deputy commissioner Adam Silver announcing the agreement.

Stern described as a "tentative understanding" that was hammered out in a 15-hour marathon meeting.

A detailed agreement must be put in writing and ratified by NBA club owners and by the more than 430 members of the NBA players' association.

The ratification process for the players is complicated by the fact that they disbanded their union when talks last broke down on November 14 and launched an anti-trust lawsuit against the league.

At the time Stern dimly predicted that move could portend a "nuclear winter" for the league, which launched its own court case to prove the legality of the lockout.

Now the players must withdraw their lawsuit and reform the union in order to vote on the deal.

Hunter said progress had already been made on the steps to end the court cases.

The league's labor relations committee was to discuss the agreement on week-end, and

Stern said he expected them to recommend it to owners.

If all proceeds as hoped, training camps and a free agency signing period will open simultaneously on December 9 and a 66-game season will begin on Christmas Day -- 55 days after the normal 82-game season was due to begin on November 1.

In the only prior NBA season shortened in a financial fight, each team played 50 games in the 1998-99 season, which did not start until February after a deal was reached in early January.

The league will have to come up with a revised schedule for both the regular season and the playoffs. Clubs will have to sort out their rosters -- with some moves likely impacted by new salary and signing rules -- and the players who had planned to wait out the dispute competing overseas will have to head home.

continues on page 15

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